



the **australian shofar**

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Messiah In All The Scriptures

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Recently I corresponded with a long term friend - a gifted Bible Teacher and beloved brother in Christ - on the absorbing subject of *The Messianic Prophecies of the Old Testament*. Jewish friends, of course, would use the term **Tenach** - their **Torah** (Law); **Nebiim** (Prophets) and **Kethuvim** (Writings). That term is interesting in light of Luke 24:26-27 and verse 44 where Jesus (Yeshua) indicated that He Himself was the One of whom the whole Jewish Scriptures (the Tenach, the believer's Old Testament), speak!

Our emailed conversations centred on *The Comprehensibility of Old Testament Messianic Prophecies*. Each successive communication and its explanatory reply led us deeper and deeper into the Bible's gold mine to extract precious nuggets of spiritual truth concerning Messiah, the Central Message of the Bible. We interacted on how God had so graciously revealed Christ (The Messiah) in all the Scriptures, and why it behoves every one - whether Jew or Gentile - to take a good look at the biblical evidence and search for Him in those sacred writings. They testify of Him (Jn. 5:39).

One extract from our many notes aptly summarizes our present series of studies on the Messianic Promises of the Bible:

From the vantage point of the New Testament's fuller revelation we look back on the Old Testament and see it full to bursting with Messianic significance in prophecies, types, pictures, anticipations and 'shadows'...

In the first article of this four-part series, David Levy answered the question, "*How Would You Recognize The Messiah?*". From Scripture, The Friends of Israel's Director of International Ministries outlined an impressive selection of inter-related passages to show conclusively that The Messiah was revealed so evidently, consistently and beautifully in both the Old and the New Testaments. Using the Promise/Fulfilment motif, he demonstrated how the prophecies dovetailed harmoniously together. The conclusion was



plain: To any honest enquirer, there can be no doubt that Jesus is the One who fulfilled all the Old Testament Messianic promises. Indeed, He is Prophet, Priest and King!

The present investigation further highlights "the Messianic significance in prophecies, types, pictures, anticipations and 'shadows' ..." while deliberately (and consciously) avoiding the hermeneutical pitfall of reading the New Testament back into the Old Testament. To do so is to succumb to the

usual, yet erroneous interpretive approach of preachers and Bible scholars who espouse Replacement Theology. Their view is that the Church is to be found in the Old Testament and that since the days of Christ (Cf. Mt. 26:28) the Church replaces Israel. Thus God has finished with Israel because Israel rejected the Messiah. Such interpretations are based on a Reformed, Covenant Theology that diminishes or denies progressive revelation and leads inexorably to an amillennial view of the Lord's Second Coming.

The Unfolding Drama

The history of the Old Testament is a history of God's sovereign dealings in Creation, with mankind in general and the nation of Israel in particular. It is a history of God's Self-revelation. He revealed Himself through *natural revelation* (Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:19ff), through the *special revelation* of His Word in personal encounter and propositional truth (eg the Old Testament Prophets), and ultimately through the Person and Work of Jesus Christ [Hebrew: '*Messiah*'] (Heb. 1:3; Jn. 1:1,14). The incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus are God's special revelation rooted in history (Jn. 1:14; Acts 2:23; Mt. 28:6). Through a series of progressively revealed covenants, culminating in the New Covenant (Jer.31:31-34; Mt. 26:28) - ie *new* in respect of the *old* Mosaic/Sinai covenant - God graciously revealed His *Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, as W. Graham Scroggie expressed it.

But this *Unfolding Drama* is to be seen in a special way, viz God's Self-Disclosure FOR

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem... *Psalm 122:6*

HIS OWN GLORY! Yes, God's purposes involve man's salvation, but that, *per se*, is not the fundamental issue of His revelation. God's works and ways are always perfect (Ps. 18:30) and they are ever and always revealed that He might be glorified (Rom. 11:36). To put it theologically: *The Bible is essentially 'doxological' not 'soteriological'*, if we may quote the esteemed Dispensationalist, Charles Caldwell Ryrie. That is to say: God's purposes, while graciously *salvific* for sinful man, are fundamentally – essentially – for His own glory! That's why the central message of the Bible, The Lamb (on the altar in the Old Testament; on the Cross in the Gospels; and on the Throne in Revelation) is a message of divine Self Revelation so given in the events of history – and particularly in Israel's history – to manifest His glory!

So it is in the matter of Messianic Promises. We read in the Old Testament, for example, "In the volume of the book it is written of Me" (Ps. 40:7). The writer to the Hebrews later quoted this and related it to Christ, the Messiah (Heb.10:7). Peter further avowed that it is "to Him all the prophets witness" (Acts 10:43). Jesus Himself challenged His critics and detractors to "search the Scriptures for they testify of (Him)" (Jn.5:39-40). Again in a post resurrection context He posed this question to dejected, disillusioned Jews: "Ought not the Christ to have suffered



"And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself". (Luke 24:26-27).

The Unique, Unfolding Drama

When the serious Bible Student looks at the mosaic of Messianic Prophecies in both Testaments, he/she soon discovers a rich kaleidoscope of interwoven prophecies, types and fore-shadowing pictures of *things to come*.

There are said to be 333 predictions concerning the coming Messiah in the Old Testament. Time and space restrictions forbid us to investigate all these, but the following examples (most in addition to David Levy's telling list) will be sufficient for us to get the picture of this *unique*, unfolding, divine drama of the Coming Messiah. We are indebted at this point to Fred John Meldau's insightful book, *Messiah In Both Testaments*, which provides the basis for the following categorized discussions.(1)

The Promised Seed: The work of redemption could only be accomplished by One Person, the promised Messiah. Scripture records that as the "*seed of the woman*", He was to bruise Satan's head (Gen. 3:15). Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, related this aspect in his discussion in Galatians 4:4. In the fullness of time, God would send forth His Son. As the "*seed of Abraham*" (Gen. 22:18; Cf. Gal.3:16) He would effect salvation by His death on the Cross. As the "*seed of David*" (Ps. 89; 132:11; Jer. 23:5; cf. Acts 13:23) He would "establish his House (Kingdom)" which would be forever (cf. Lk.1:31-33). Moreover, He would come from the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10; Heb. 7:14).

Specified Time: Daniel prophesied of a specific time for Messiah's life, ministry and death (Dan. 9:24-25). Earlier, Moses had written of His coming in a special way (Gen. 49:10; cf. Lk. 2:1-2). Centuries before His birth, Isaiah prophesied how He would be born (Is. 7:14; Cf. Mt.1:18-23), while Micah predicted exactly where that birth would occur (Mic. 5:2; Cf. Mt. 2:1; Lk.2:4-5). In His

birth, great persons would visit and adore Him just as the Psalmist had said (Ps. 72:10; cf. Mt. 2:1-11). What is more, associated with His birth, the rage of a jealous king would cause innocent children to be slaughtered (Jer. 31:15; cf. Mt. 2:16-18).

As for His First Advent (Hag. 2:6f), so it will be for his Second Coming to earth (Heb.12:25-28f). Both Advents were specifically prophesied. In relation to the latter aspect, one need only refer to such passages as Zech.12-14, especially 14:1-4ff; 9:(9)-10; Mt. 24-25; Heb. 12:25-28; Rev. 19:11-16,



to cite just a few examples. Incidentally, it should be noted that if the prophecies concerning Messiah's First Advent came true in every detail – and they did – it is logical to deduce that those of His Second Advent will be fulfilled too – just as Scripture said.

Preceded By A Forerunner: Before entering into a public ministry, Messiah would be preceded by a forerunner, John the Baptist (Is. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; cf. Mt. 3:1-1; Lk. 1:17). Deuteronomy 18:18 had predicted that He would be "*a prophet like unto Moses*" (Note Acts 3:20-22). This Coming One would have a special anointing of the Holy Spirit (Ps.

45:7) just as Isaiah had prophesied (Is. 11:2; 61:1-2; cf. Mt. 3:16; Lk. 4:15-18ff, 43).

Predicted Ministries: Furthermore, we read that Messiah's ministry would begin in Galilee (Is. 9:1-2; Cf. Mt. 4:12-17ff), later move to Jerusalem (Zech. 9:9; Cf. Mt. 21:1-5) and involve the Temple (Hag. 2:7-9; Mal. 3:1; Cf. Mt. 21:12). He would engage in teaching His hearers specifically in parables (Ps. 78:2; Cf. Mt. 13:34-35). This method, it is said, would fulfil a specific purpose for those who would not accept Him or what He had to say (Mt. 13:34ff; Mark 4:1-10ff; Lk. 8:12). At

deeds of wicked men? Never! As Paul said:

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

"For who has known the mind of the LORD?"

Or who has become His counselor?"

"Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?"

For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen. Rom 11:33-35 (Emphases added)

Prophesied Death, Resurrection & Present Ministry:

The Messiah would be hated without a cause (Ps. 69:4; Is. 49:7; Cf. Jn. 7:48; 15:25), He would be rejected by the rulers (Ps. 118:22; Cf. Mt. 21:42), betrayed by a friend (Ps. 41:9; 55:12-13; Cf. Jn. 13:18-21), forsaken by His disciples (Zech. 13:7; Cf. Mt. 26:31,56), sold for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12; Cf. Mt. 26:15), smitten on the cheek (Mic. 5:1; Cf. Mt. 27:30), spat upon (Is. 50:6; Cf. Mt. 27:30), mocked (Ps. 22:7-8; Cf. Mt. 27:31, 39-44) and beaten (Is. 50:6; 53:7-8ff; Cf. Mt. 26:67; 27:26,30). But His tragic, violent death by crucifixion was divinely pre-ordained *"from the foundation of the world"* (1 Pt. 1:18-20ff; Tit.1:2; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:4-5ff) and He died triumphantly, vicariously, atoningly – once for all! (Is. 53:5-6ff; Ps. 22; Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:5-9ff; 2 Cor. 5:21). His service and sacrifice for the Lord would be in fulfilment of the *Suffering Servant* Redeemer passages of Isaiah (42:1-4 and especially chapter 53).

Even more details are prophesied concerning His death by crucifixion. Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 are two cases in point. Substitutionary atonement is clearly in view in these contexts. His hands and His feet were pierced (Ps. 22:16; Zech 12:10; Cf. Jn. 19:18, 37; 20:25). Yet not one of His bones would be broken (Cf. Ex 12:46; Ps. 34:20; Cf. Jn. 19:33-36). He was to suffer thirst (Ps. 22:15; Cf. Jn. 19:28) and to be given vinegar to drink (Ps. 69:21; Cf. Mt. 27:34) and He was to

be *"numbered with the transgressors"* (Is. 53:12; Cf. Mt. 27:38). Moreover, His death would be not only for the Jews but for the Gentiles (Is. 43:21; 45:22; Cf. Mt. 12:18-21). Salvation would come to them in accordance with the Abrahamic covenant promise (Gen. 12:3; Cf. Gal. 3:13-14), but they must believe and receive Him (Jn.1:12; Rom. 1-5).

Messiah's body was to be buried with the rich in His death (Is. 53:9; Cf. Mt. 27:57-60) but would *"not see corruption"* (Ps. 16:1; Acts 2:31). He would be *"raised from the dead"* (Ps. 2:7; 16:10; Cf. Acts 13:33) and ascend to God's right hand (Ps. 68:18; Cf. Lk. 24:51; Acts 1:9; Cf. also Ps. 110:1; Heb. 1:3). In a word then, God the Father accepted His sacrifice *"for the sins of the whole world"* (1 Jn; 2:2) and raised Him from the dead on the third day (Ps. 16:10-11; Acts 2:36; Cf. 3:18-22ff; 1 Cor. 15:2-3 etc). He was to be a *"priest after the order of Melchizedek"* (Ps. 110:4; cf. Heb.5:5-6 and 7:1ff) – a divine role He presently exercises according to Hebrews 7-8.



What does this plethora of biblical evidence suggest, even prove? An analogy is helpful: As in the old world, all roads led to Rome, so all the lines of messianic prophecy meet in Jesus, the Messiah of Israel and the Lord of all who believe Him and who receive Him.

He Himself said: *"Abraham saw My day and was satisfied"* (Jn. 8:56). He also said: *"Moses wrote of Me"* (Jn. 5:46). He showed

the same time, He performed miracles (Isa. 35:5-6; Cf. Mt. 11:4-6) which John recorded with an evangelistic purpose (Cf. Jn. 1-12, noting 1:11[*"His own"*]; 13-21, noting 13:1 [*"His own"*], and especially 20:30-31). His brethren *"rejected Him"* (Ps. 69:8; Is. 53:3; Cf. Jn. 1:11; 7:5) for they regarded Him as a *"stone of stumbling and a rock of offence"* (Is. 8:14; Ps. 118:18ff; Rom. 9:32-33; 1 Pt. 2:8). With this outcome, could it be man who would have the last say? Would Messiah's rejection and crucifixion ring the death-knell to God's unique Plan? Would His glory be effaced by the unscrupulous counsel and

the connection between the Old Testament and the New when He said in His Sermon on the Mount: *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets ... but to fulfil"* (Mt. 5:17). Paul later showed that *"Christ is the end of the law to those who believe"* (Rom. 10:4).

With justification, therefore, we conclude: **All the messianic predictions of the Old Testament converge in Jesus of Nazareth as a "focal point of dazzling glory"!**

The Ultimate, Unavoidable Decision

Our study has brought us to a confronting question: What is your response to the claims of this Messiah? Do you heartily concur and acknowledge Him as the promised Coming One whose divine mission was *"to save us from our sins"* (Cf. Mk. 10:45; Lk. 19:10), and because of *"the power of an endless life"* (Heb.7:16), *"save to the uttermost"* (Heb. 7:25) those who trust Him as their personal Saviour? Or is there still some lingering scepticism that Messiah is in both Testaments and you therefore deny faith's necessary response? Why the reluctance to accept God's Word as the ground of faith (Cf. Rom.10:17)? Could it be that your present spiritual condition emulates the sad lot of the unbelieving Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day?

My trans-Tasman brother with whom I recently corresponded has a pertinent word for you, if such is your situation. He wrote:

"There are several occasions in the New Testament when Christ rebuked Old Testament constituents for not grasping the clarity of Old Testament revelation. (1) Nicodemus was asked, "Are you a teacher in Israel and you do not know these things?" (John 3:2); (2) The Pharisees were rebuked for their lack of understanding that came from their refusal to acknowledge what the Old Testament taught. Though they were obsessive in their study of the Old Testament (John 5:39) and experts in the law (Matt 22:35), they were clearly

selective and/or superficial in their reading (Matt 12:3,5; 19:4; 21:16,42; 22:29,31) or just plain resistant to its message (John 5:39-47; 8:42-47). Had they accepted the teaching of the Scriptures they would have accepted Jesus Himself (John 5:40) since He was the focus of the Old Testament revelation; (3) The disciples were rebuked for their foolishness. Their confusion was not due to a lack of Messianic clarity in the Old Testament. Rather, their confusion was the result of **a spiritual delinquency** ('slow of heart to believe') and **a scriptural deficiency**



- they had not embraced *"all"* that the prophets [had] spoken....And beginning with Moses and *all* the Prophets he explained to them what was said in *all* the Scriptures concerning Himself" (Luke 24:25-27). Clearly Christ even expected his hearers to understand the prophecy of Daniel (Matt 24:15). It appears then that the problem was not in the lucidity of the Old Testament but in the perceptivity of its recipients. This is not to deny the incremental nature of Old Testament revelation, but it is to say that the Old Testament revelation was sufficiently clear to prepare Israel for the reception of Messiah."

In light of Scripture then, all of us – be we Jewish or Gentile – are confronted with an ultimate, unavoidable question: "What then will we do with this Jesus, The Christ?" The

issue of one's eternal destiny is indissolubly bound up with our personal response. If we receive Him (Jn. 1:12) there is eternal life (Jn. 17:3) in glory with Him (Rev. 21-22). To reject Him is to remain under the wrathful judgement of God (Jn. 3:17-30; Cf. Rom. 1:18-31) separated from Him forever (Rev. 20:11-15; Cf. Is. 66:24). Messiah is in both Testaments and He is the Answer to our sinful need, now and in eternity! Receive Him as your Saviour – now!

Footnotes

(1) Fred John Meldau's book *Messiah In Both Testaments* is now out of print but has been published under another title by The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry Inc. See *The Prophets Still Speak: Messiah In Both Testaments*, The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, Inc. Revised Edition, 2006, Pp. 16-17, 22-23.



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